

# Public Scoping –Playa Sand Project

July 27, 2022

## Introduction

Uinta Basin Sand, LLC (the Applicant) has submitted a proposed plan of operation to extract sand from mining claims held by cooperating company Leverite, LLC. The proposed project, referred to as the Playa Sand Project, would use heavy equipment to remove sand within a 393-acre area of Section 7 and 18 of Township 4S Range 23E for the next 12 years, which includes time for reclamation. Leverite's affiliate, Uinta Basin Sand, LLC (Operator), would conduct the operations for this project. The Operator proposes a reclamation method in which they would disturb approximately 20 acres at a time and begin reclamation as development moves to the next block. The Operator would use Bean Draw Road, Island Park Road, and Brush Creek Road to access the project area and haul the sand to the crushing plant. The Operator would construct a new road approximately 7700 feet long within the project area. The road and area of operations have been designed to avoid disturbance of identified sage grouse habitat, and paleontological resources. Mining activities may occur year-round but would only occur during daylight hours. The Operator would conduct dust suppression on roads and operational areas using water hauled to site by truck from Brush Creek. A spill contingency plan is in place that would prevent, contain, and prepare a response to any fuel spills. The preliminary drawings of the mine claim, access road, and right of way locations are in Maps 1 and 2.

## BLM's Authority to Consider the Project

The project itself is subject to either 43 CFR § 3800, which are the general mining claim regulations, or 43 CFR § 3600, which are the mineral material regulations. Which regulations apply depend on whether the BLM determines the sand is an uncommon or common type. That review is ongoing at the Utah State Office.

## BLM's Decision to be Made

The Vernal BLM is considering approval of this proposed project in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which requires the BLM to consider environmental impacts and make an informed decision. After completion of the NEPA review process, the BLM will decide whether to deny the project, approve it as proposed, or approve it as modified.

## Potential Resource Issues

The BLM believes the project may impact the following resources.

- Greater sage-grouse and their habitats
- Paleontological sites
- Dinosaur National Monument
- Neighboring residences

## Coordination with other Agencies

The BLM Vernal Field Office has notified the following agencies about this project, and is in the process of extending cooperating agency invitations to them

- State of Utah Division of Oil, Gas, and Mining.
- Dinosaur National Monument National Park Service.
- Uintah County.

## How Can You Participate?

The BLM is seeking information from you, the public, about the project and the area, in a step called public scoping. The scoping period for the Playa Sand Project will be active from July 27, 2022 until August 26, 2022. During this period, the public can identify resource issues for analysis, alternatives to address the purpose and need, and data gaps. The most useful scoping comments answer the following questions:

- What other alternatives should the BLM consider?
- What other resources may be impacted by the Playa Sand Project, and what are the potential impacts?
- What other projects might result from the Playa Sand Project?
- What environmental, economic, or other data should the BLM consider?
- What cumulative activities or impacts are occurring in the area?
- Should the BLM coordinate with any other people, groups, or agencies?
- Are there any permits the Applicant must obtain?

Please submit your written comments on or before, August 26, 2022. Please reference “Playa Sand Project” when submitting your comments. You may submit comments using the BLM’s ePlanning website, by email, or by mail.

- <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/admin/project/2013629/510>
- Email: [BLM\\_UT\\_Vernal\\_Comments@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_UT_Vernal_Comments@blm.gov)
- Mail: 170 South 500 East Vernal UT 84078

## Open House Meeting

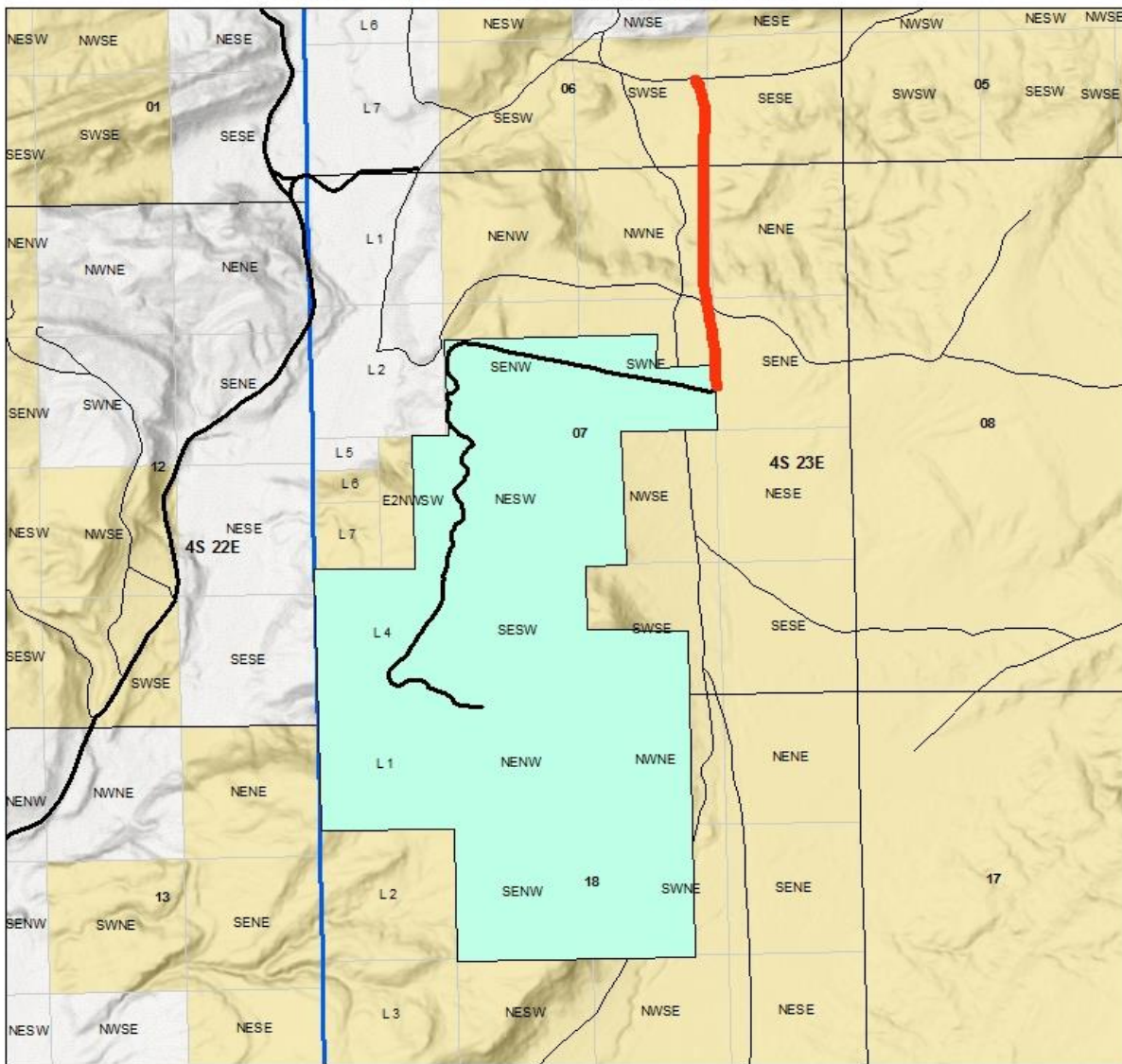
The BLM will host an open house for this project at the Uintah Conference Center, 313 East 200 South, Vernal, Utah, on August 10th, 2022, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. At this meeting you can ask BLM staff questions and share any information or perspective you might have about the project. There will not be a formal presentation or formal speaking procedures. Members of the public can come at any time during the meeting to ask or talk about this project.

## Next Steps and Timing

The BLM will use the information gathered from public scoping to create an Environmental Assessment that discloses the impacts from any analyzed alternatives. When complete, the BLM will make the Environmental Assessment available for public review during a public comment period. After the comment period, the BLM would update the Environmental Assessment and prepare a decision. The BLM aims to issue the decision in September 2022.

# Map 1

## Utah Playa Sand Project UTU95173



**Utah Playa Sand Project**

Right of Way	<b>Roads</b>	PLSB Townships	<b>Surface Management</b>
Access Road	Major Collector	Section	BLM
Project Area...	Local	PLSB Second Division (Quarter Sections)	Private

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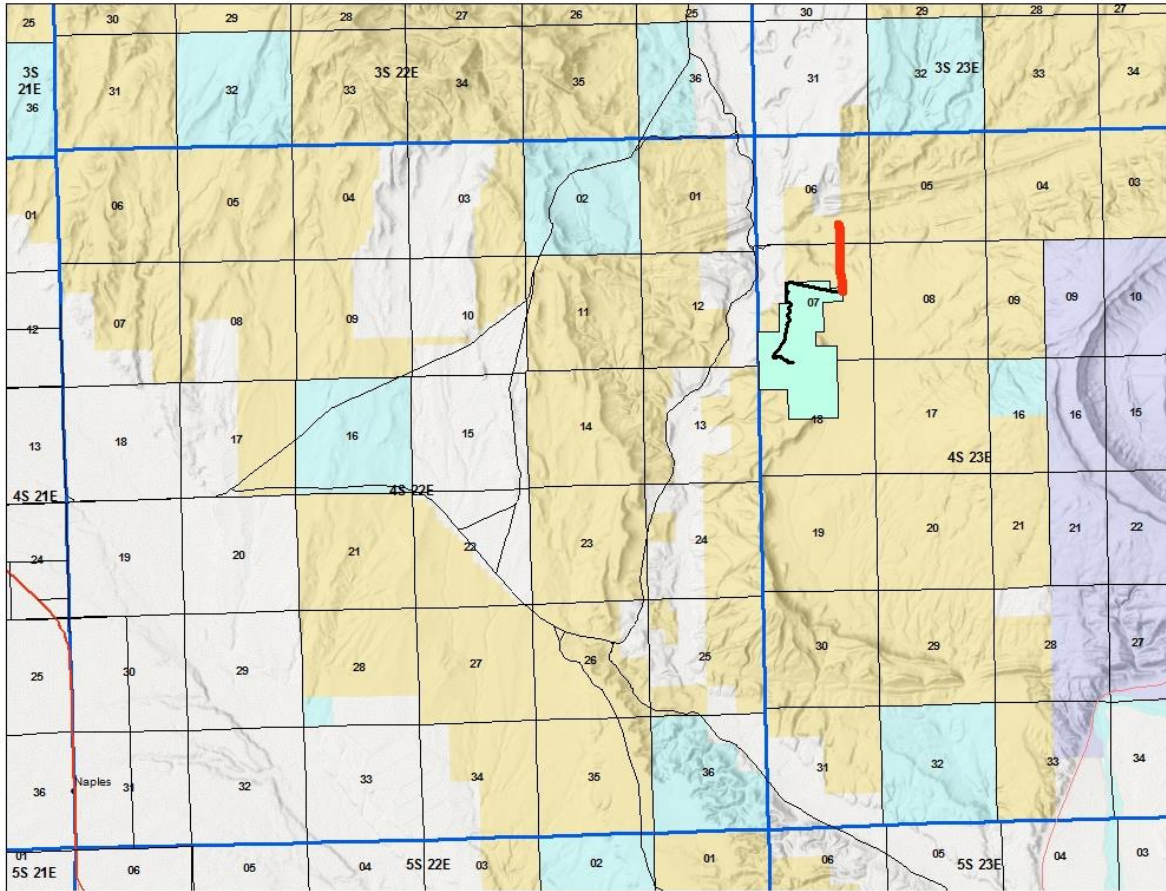
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Bureau of Land Management  
Vernal Field Office  
170 South 500 East  
Vernal UT 84078

Map 1 - Showing Immediate project area with proposed access road and ROW.

## Map 2



**Map 2 - Showing project location with reference to Vernal and Dinosaur National Monument.**